



Innovation Academy of Robertson County  
Springfield Middle School



715 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue West ♦ Springfield, TN 37172 ♦ Phone (615) 384-4821

Dr. Grant Bell, Principal ♦ Ms. Charlotte Osborn, Asst. Principal ♦ Mr. Warren Corbin, Asst. Principal

**“We are EPIC!”**  
*The Jacket's Buzz*

May 15, 2023

*“Providing a well-lit path in the pursuit of purpose and happiness.”*

*“Every single day, we will strive to ensure that everyone is safe and respected;  
and that ALL scholars are responsible for working to master ALL standards.”*



*“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”*

**William Butler Yeats**

<b>Monday:</b>	RISE Field trip to Mammoth Cave
	EPIC Players <i>Mean Girls</i> Viewing 3:30
<b>Tuesday:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation Cap and Gowns Issued
	Choir Concert 6:00
<b>Wednesday:</b>	High School Awards 9:00
	Administrator Effectiveness Survey 3:30
	RCPA Graduation in the Theatre
<b>Thursday:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Picnic 11:30-3:30
	Baby Seay Shower 3:45
<b>Friday:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> grade Laptop Return
	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade <i>Outsiders</i> Virtual Field Trip

# SHS Softball



Makenzie Cox was recognized as an All-Tournament Selection as the Lady Jackets finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the district. Makenzie shut down the #1 seed Clarksville Wildcats with a 4-0 shutout win



**Epic Players  
present**

# MEAN GIRLS JR.

**BOOK BY**

**TINA  
FEY**

**MUSIC BY**

**JEFF  
RICHMOND**

**LYRICS BY**

**NELL  
BENJAMIN**

Show Dates

May 5                      7pm  
May 6                      2pm & 7pm

Tickets

Students:     \$5  
Adults:        \$10

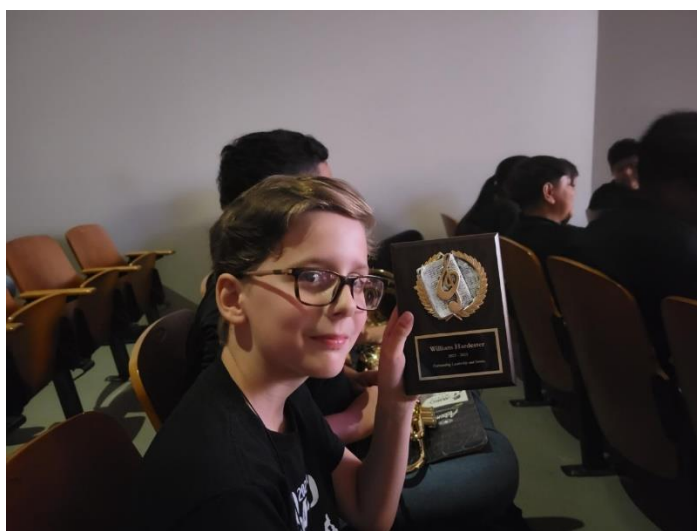
Innovation Academy Theater  
715 5th Ave W, Springfield, TN







# Sounds of Spring Band Concert









# Happening Around IA



Eric Weisner graduated with an Education Specialist Degree from Liberty University. Congratulations!







Jessica Porter took her friend's daughter, Carrington, to the Taylor Swift concert!



# Beta Club Reward Trip



Skating, bowling, and a Sound's game  
That's a full day of fun!





# Socs vs. Greasers

**Who: Team 7 Platinum**

**What: A competition to settle which crew is the best. 5 E.C. Points for Dressing Up**

**When: Tuesday, December 20th**

## GIRLS



## The Outsiders

## Boys



## Socs



## Greasers

As we finish up our novel, *The Outsiders*, we are planning an Outsiders Day on Friday the 19th. We will take a virtual field trip to The Outsiders Museum in Tulsa. Scholars will be able to ask the presenter questions and see artifacts from the book and movie. We will also hope to watch the movie on this day.

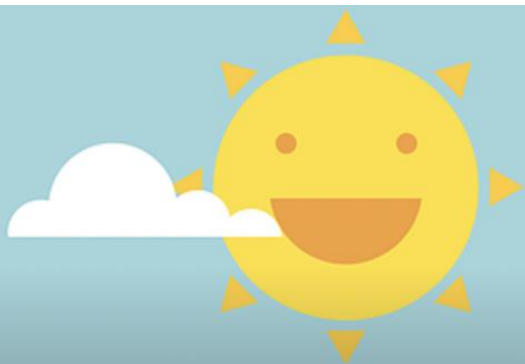
To add to the fun, we want to dress like the book's characters. The book features the Soc's and Greasers. Scholars may choose either style and dress in that fashion for the day. I have attached some photos for reference. Mrs. Gertsch

Socs



## Greaser





# Here Comes the Son!

Join us for a baby shower for Mr. Seay and his wife!

May 18<sup>th</sup> at 3:45 in the library

Light Snacks will be provided





# Follow us on social media!

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@springfieldmiddleschoolrobco  
@InnovationRobCo

**Twitter:**

@smsrobco  
@iAinAction

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@springfieldmiddleschoolrobco  
@iAinAction



# Lagniappe

## The Low-hanging Fruit of Grading Reform: Eliminating the Zero

By Joshua Kunneth



I waited years to begin significant grading reform in my classroom, and the more I consider the positive impact of my new practices, the more I regret not starting years ago.

But my regret is most palpable when I consider how easy some of these reforms were to begin. So here's a look at what I see as the low-hanging fruit in grading reform: *eliminating the zero*.

Eliminating the use of zeros has been one of the easiest reforms made this year. It's made an immediate impact on student grades, making them more accurate AND fair.

Of course I've had to do more in other areas of my classroom to fill the void left by the zero, but more on that later.



## 5 Major Problems With the Zero

Zeros, of course, are often used by teachers when a student has failed to turn in an assignment or complete an assessment. Teachers may also assign zeros for behaviors like cheating or late work. But there are several problems with these uses of the zero.

1. Zeros are usually inaccurate. If grades are intended to represent student learning (which grading literature overwhelming supports), then assigning a student a zero for anything other than zero learning makes grades inaccurate.
2. Zeros are usually about behavior. A zero for not completing an assignment or assessment is punishing the student's decision to not do the work or to cut class when she knows there is an assessment. A zero for plagiarism is punishment for copying someone else's work. But none of these purposes for the zero are directly about student learning.
3. Zeros are harsh punishment. Even if a teacher feels that a student has no knowledge or skill on a standard, assigning a zero harshly punishes a student IF the teacher uses a percentage scale for calculating grades. To recover from a zero, a student would have to move up at least 60 levels on most scales just to reach the D range. This is why I advocate for the use of a four-point scale instead (more on this in a future post).
4. Zeros give kids an out. Assigning a zero for missing work or a missing assessment sends a signal to the student that the teacher has finished grading and it's time to move on. To the student with the zero, this means no more pressure to continue learning previous standards or to show evidence of their learning.
5. Zeros are about power. Many teachers use zeros to "teach students a lesson" or to "not let them off the hook"—I know I did. Teachers don't have much power in schools, but grades have traditionally been a significant source of power in the classroom. The zero has been a major way to wield that power. But grades shouldn't be about power or control—that's not their purpose.

## 5 Ways to Replace the Zero

So if you agree that the zero has little—if any—place in the classroom, the next step is to plan how to fill the void left by the zero. Simply eliminating the zero without addressing this void may result in letting kids off without consequences or lowering academic rigor, as many opponents to this reform have warned.

Here are five ways to remove the zero while maintaining or increasing academic rigor AND accountability.

1. Communicate missing work and assessments in other ways. Students and parents still need to be aware of missing work and assessments. Many gradebooks allow for

codes such as missing or incomplete without the use of grades. Every system is different, but the key is to find a way to communicate without a grade. All students with multiple missing assignments or one or more missing assessments need in-person reminders from the teacher, and they often need a parent contact and counselor referrals as time goes by. This isn't easy, but it often produces greater results than simply assigning zeros. And something I realized as I began this reform was that when I used zeros in the past, it also let me off the hook from holding students accountable for missing work. Eliminating the zero should hold both teachers and students accountable to improve student learning.

2. Use alternative forms of evidence. If a student doesn't complete an assessment, consider the evidence you do have of his learning—whether it's class work, what you've heard him say in class discussion, or something else. While this might not be weighted equally to the assessment, it is some evidence of learning, and it should count for something.
3. Eliminate privileges. Consider privileges you give students in your class, such as allowing them to charge their phones, letting them listen to music when independently working, or permitting them to eat snacks. Then simply remove the privilege for students with missing work or assessments until they catch up. We do the same thing with our own kids, and this can work just as well in the classroom.
4. Use restorative practices for behaviors. Instead of using zeros for cheating, late assignments, no name papers, or tardies, consider using restorative practices to address these behaviors. These practices are commonly used when students are sent to the office for problem behaviors, so why wouldn't we use them in our classrooms as well? A simple way to do this is to either hold a conference with the student or ask him to write a reflection, describing what happened, what he was thinking at the time, how he thinks now, who was affected by the behavior, how the person/group was affected, and how he can make it right.
5. Consider minimum grades. In addition to the above practices, consider using a minimum grade if you still feel the need to assign a zero in specific situations—especially if you use percentage grades. A typical minimum grade is an F grade of 50% instead of a 0% to render the F range equal to other letter grade ranges.

## How to Start

Some reforms need time to plan and time to inform students, parents, and administrators—but not this one. To start this reform, just stop giving zeros. But also find a way to fill the void left by the zero for each situation you've used it in the past.

So go ahead—pick that low-hanging fruit. Then take a bite. You're likely to see grading from a whole new perspective.



What are your experiences using zeros in the classroom? What successes and challenges have you experienced with similar reforms? Please share.

**Dr. Joshua Kunnath is a high school English teacher and department chair in California. He is the author of multiple education articles on topics of grading reform and literacy. He is also editor of the Journal of School Administration Research and Development. Follow him on Twitter @JoshKunnath or visit his website at JoshKunnath.com.**

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